

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT
Transitional Youth Plan

INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT
12/10/99

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary (to be developed after review)

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Introduction | i |
| SECTION I: STATE VISION AND GOALS | 01 |
| YOUTH DEVELOPMENT MODEL | 02 |
| LINKING WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | 04 |
| The Economic Resurgence of Washington, D.C. | 04 |
| Goals 2000 | 07 |
| School-to-Careers Transition | 08 |
| Youth Opportunities Initiative | 09 |
| Children and Youth Investment Initiative | 10 |
| GOALS FOR YOUTH | 11 |
| YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT SYSTEM | 12 |
| STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES | 13 |
| ENHANCEMENTS UNDER WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT | 15 |
| SECTION II: YOUTH PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | 18 |
| SECTION III: ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT SYSTEM | 22 |
| YOUTH CUSTOMERS | 23 |
| STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD | 24 |
| COORDINATION WITH LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS | 27 |
| PROCESS FOR AWARDING GRANTS AND CONTRACTS | 27 |
| CRITERIA FOR SELECTING PROVIDERS AND PROGRAMS | 28 |
| ONE-STOP IMPLEMENTATION | 30 |
| CURRENT SYSTEM ABILITY TO MEET YOUTH NEEDS | 33 |
| STATE PRIORITIES FOR YOUTH | 35 |
| SECTION IV: STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT | 37 |
| CAPACITY TO DEVELOP AND MANAGE EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS | 37 |
| COORDINATION WITH KEY RESOURCES | 39 |
| Education | 40 |
| Post-Secondary Educational Opportunities | 42 |
| Job Corps | 43 |
| Out of School Youth | 44 |
| Youth with Disabilities | 45 |
| Other Special Needs and Hard-to-Serve Youth | 46 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| PROGRAM DESIGN | 47 |
| Linkages between Academic and Occupational Learning | 49 |
| Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences | 50 |
| Occupational Skills Training | 51 |
| Leadership Development Opportunities | 57 |
| SECTION V: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT | 57 |
| ENSURING COLLABORATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT | |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | |
|---|----|
| Figure One: Youth Development Model | 03 |
| Figure Two: Broad Economic and Workforce Development Goals for Youth | 12 |
| Figure Three: Agencies on the Youth Collaborative and WIA and Youth Council | 14 |
| Figure Four: Structure for WIA Youth System | 16 |
| Figure Five: Workforce Investment Act Principles Align with D.C. Priorities | 17 |
| Figure Six: Youth Performance Indicators | 20 |
| Figure Seven: District of Columbia Youth Customers Under WIA | 23 |
| Figure Eight: Issues and Needs Identified by Youth Customers | 24 |
| Figure Nine: Purpose of the D.C. Workforce Investment Council | 25 |
| Figure Ten: Eligibility Requirements for Training Providers and Programs | 29 |
| Figure Eleven: DC Networks Planned One-Stop Services | 32 |
| Figure Twelve: District of Columbia Pathways and Sample Career Areas | 49 |
| Figure Thirteen: Youth Services Client Flow Chart | 53 |

APPENDIXES

Appendix One: *Economic Resurgence* Executive Summary

Appendix Two: Goals 2000 Background Information

Appendix Three: *School-to-Careers* Executive Summary

Appendix Four: *Youth Opportunities* Executive Summary

Appendix Five: Children and Youth Initiative, Executive Order/Memorandum of Understanding

Appendix Six: Mayor's Order establishing the D.C. Workforce Investment Council (WIC)

Appendix Seven: Listing of WIC members

Appendix Eight: Listing of WIC Youth Council Members

Appendix Nine: Draft Documents for Request for Proposal (RFP) for Training Providers

Appendix Ten: Draft Documents for Individual Referral Process

Appendix Eleven: Background Information on D.C. One Stop Centers

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Regional Field Memorandum No. 8-99, the District of Columbia has elected to submit a Transitional Plan for the Youth Activities Portion of the Strategic Five Year Plan for Title I of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. While the entire workforce investment system required by WIA is not ready for full implementation, the critical elements necessary to provide comprehensive services for youth consistent with Sections 129 of the Act are in place.

This Plan reflects the **comprehensive, systemic approach to youth development** described under WIA, and establishes priorities that allow for as many eligible youth as possible to receive services. In this way, all youth programming will be guided by the effective principles and practices embodied in WIA, and WIA eligible youth will have access to the full range of education and career opportunities available within the District.

Dynamic change is underway within the District of Columbia. The Workforce Investment Act -- driven by principles systems reform, improved collaboration, increased accountability, performance results and customer satisfaction -- is very much aligned with the direction set by Mayor Anthony Williams, in cooperation with the District Council, business leadership and the community at large. As a result, WIA is viewed as a valuable tool in reaching the District's broad based economic and workforce development goals.

As required, the Youth Plan describes the collaborative manner in which the D.C. Workforce Investment Council through its Youth Council contributed to the development of the Plan; identifies the criteria for eligible youth providers; and addresses required and other allowable youth activities. As a critical part of the transition from the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), it acknowledges the shift required from serving youth under JTPA to a more comprehensive strategy in accordance with the intent of WIA. For example, summer youth employment is no longer a stand alone effort, but an enriched work-based opportunity linked to academic and occupational learning that is one of ten required program offerings.

Moreover, this Plan focuses on strategies that will ensure meeting negotiated performance levels, such as connecting programs and services to labor market demands and holding program operators publicly accountable for performance results. These and other key design elements will ensure the sound investment of federal funds and send a powerful message – under WIA there is “no more business as usual.”

Please note that, while this Transition Plan includes all of the required elements, some have been slightly reordered from the suggested outline. This was done intentionally to reflect the District’s planning process and to best present its framework for connecting eligible youth with the full range of services and community resources necessary for academic and employment success.

“High standards of academic achievement, career preparation, and citizenship for students of all ages...are absolutely essential... [Education] and training must be designed to meet the technological and other proficiency skills required for workplace participants in the 21st century, as well as the particular requirements of the City’s economic driving forces.”

District of Columbia Economic Development Vision & Strategy, 1997

“All District of Columbia youth will acquire academic, occupational, community and workplace knowledge and skills through a comprehensive PreK-16 School-to-Career system that enables them to access viable, high quality careers; encourages lifelong learning and continued upward mobility; promotes economic self-sufficiency; and equips them to be responsible, contributing citizens.”

District of Columbia School-to-Career Vision Statement, 1998

“The vision is a collaborative that will align resources and create a seamless web of high quality services and opportunities that promote the healthy development of the city’s young people through a network of nurturing families, caring neighborhoods, and safe and enriching centers of learning in and out of school.”

D.C. Children and Youth Investment Initiative Vision Statement, 1999

“The vision for Youth Workforce Investment in the District of Columbia is a comprehensive, integrated system of effective services and youth programs, combined with strong supports and meaningful opportunities within communities, that lead to positive academic, social, personal and career outcomes for all youth.”

Workforce Investment Act Transitional Youth Plan, 2000

SECTION I: STATE VISION AND GOALS

For the past several years, the District of Columbia has been crafting a deliberate and aggressive strategy to provide comprehensive services for youth as a critical component of its overall workforce development system. As reflected in the powerful vision statements above, business, labor, government, education, parent and community leaders in the District of Columbia have been working together to develop a shared vision for youth that ties together the broad education, economic, community and workforce development goals of the District and region.

The District is now poised and ready to pull all of the youth program and service pieces together into a **comprehensive youth workforce investment system** that will translate this vision into a

reality for all of its young people. This Transition Youth Plan is a valuable tool for describing what that system will look like and how it will work to enhance and expand current youth programs and services under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. It will serve as the blueprint for a new system that connects youth with a full range of services and supports that lead to academic and employment success.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT MODEL

The Youth Workforce Investment vision reflects a growing awareness among D.C. leadership that the community's ability to compete in the new economic environment requires close links between economic development and workforce development, and between community development and youth development. A recently released report, *Spheres of Influence*, sponsored by The Annie E. Casey Foundation offers an excellent framework through which to describe the District's overall approach to youth development, as illustrated in Figure Two.

The model focuses on two sets of dynamics – spheres of **youth development** (the skills, attitudes and experiences that kids need in order to grow into productive adulthood) and spheres of **community influence** (the programs and services, community supports and opportunity structure that foster and support positive youth development). It suggests that these six “spheres” are ongoing and highly interactive in determining how young people will turn out as adults. This approach reflects the District's basic strategy for youth development.

District leadership believe that, to improve youth outcomes, simultaneous interventions at both the individual and the community level are essential. Continued and enhanced investments in program improvements and service reforms to assist youth are crucial. Yet building the capacity of local communities and their residents to organize themselves for sustained collective action on behalf of their young people is also essential. This dual approach underscores the need to connect individual and community development strategies.

On the youth side, the framework suggests that **outcomes can be thought of as the sum of what kids can do (skills), what they learn (experiences) and how they feel (attitudes).** *Youth potential* is defined as the intersection of skills and attitudes; *youth competence* reflects the intersection of skills and experience; and *youth adaptability* reflects the relationship between youth attitudes and the suitability of those attitudes to the structured opportunities and experiences available to them.

On the community side, **programs and services, opportunities and supports come together as the community influences that impact youth development.** *Collaborative supports* represent the programs, services and supports available within communities and neighborhoods. *Articulation* refers to areas where programs and services available to youth connect with the opportunity structure in a community, such as work-based learning opportunities through school-to-careers. And *acculturation* represents the fit between the culture and norms of a neighborhood and those in settings that offer opportunities to youth, such as workplaces.

LINKING WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In developing this Youth Transition Plan, several critical milestones were identified as having a significant impact on its design. Each is discussed to provide insight into the evolution of the District's broad economic and workforce development goals for youth. The milestones include: (1) Economic Development Resurgence; (2) Goals 2000; (3) School- to-Career Transition; (4) Youth Opportunities Initiative and (5) the Children and Youth Investment Initiative.

The Economic Resurgence of Washington, D.C.

In 1998, a bold, hard hitting economic development strategy was developed by D.C. Government, the Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority, and the private sector, in cooperation with a host of other key public partners. *The Economic Resurgence of*

Washington, D.C., Citizens Plan for Prosperity in the 21st Century was the first-ever strategic economic development plan for the District.

While the Plan acknowledges past periods of declining jobs, rising crime and negative image, it argues a strong case for a city on the rebound. “As a city well suited for the New Economy of the 21st Century, we have begun to turn our knowledge and information base, our technological and communications strengths, and our position as a global center into building blocks of prosperity for our businesses and residents.” The Plan lays out a comprehensive strategy that centers around three major initiatives:

- 1. *Growing the Private Sector:*** With the downsizing over the past decade of the federal government, which had been a major employer of D.C. residents, District efforts have been focused on diversifying the economic base by growing the private sector.
- 2. *Supporting Industry-Specific Networks:*** The Plan creates six active and on-going Industry Network groups that represent the leading edge of business and job growth in the City and will serve as D.C. engines of prosperity for the 21st century:
 - Business/Professional/Financial/Association Services
 - Hospitality/Entertainment/Tourism/ Specialty Retail
 - Biomedical Research/Health Services
 - Universities/Educational/Research Institutions
 - Information Technology /Telecommunications
 - Media/Publications

In the metropolitan Washington region, these six Industry Networks accounted for over 1.3 million jobs in 1996, 55 percent of total private sector employment. From 1980 to 1990, jobs in the six networks combined grew by 90 percent across the region. Within Washington,

D.C., these six Networks employ nearly 300,000 people, almost two-third of the city's private jobs, with tremendous growth potential in the next decade.

3. ***Creating Cross-Cutting Policy Workgroups***: Six workgroups are functioning to focus on broad issues that directly impact the quality of life and the prosperity of the citizens in the District. Working together, hundreds of citizen experts are focused on issues related to business promotion, business climate, downtown development, neighborhood development, attracting/retaining residents, and workforce development. They cover a range of issues, including improving schools, supporting neighborhood and community development, emphasizing quality job training, and growing businesses and jobs.

More than 400 business, civic, community and government leaders developed over **40 action steps**, which will all be initiated – and many completed – before the new millenium. A significant number **relate to community and workforce development** and will directly support this Youth Plan. For example, the *Economic Resurgence Plan* calls for:

- aggressive and bold action from the D.C. Workforce Investment Council in setting up strong performance requirements and accountability measures for workforce investment;
- the expansion of the University of the District of Columbia, D.C.'s only university, to include a two year degree/ "community college" education to meet the needs of employers;
- the provision of resources for public "school-to-career" programs and charter schools to train students for jobs in growing industries such as information technology and hospitality;
- the full implementation of the Regional Jobs Initiative to prepare residents for employment in the fast growing information technology and telecommunication industries; and
- increased public and private support for community development corporations and community-based organizations to expand their capacity to development businesses, jobs, promote homeownership and provide quality programs and services to residents.

The economic development plan served a critical function in workforce development in that it:

- identifies the **key growth sectors** of a diversifying economic base within the District;

- provides a **focal point** for business development and education/training efforts;
- communicates a **positive message of growth**, development and JOBS for District residents
- underscores the **importance of building a strong workforce development system** for both youth and adults. See Attachment One for Executive Summary.

Goals 2000

About the same time the economic development plan was unveiled, a group of community stakeholders was engaged in a major planning process as a part of the national effort to improve schools called Goals 2000. After months of frank discussion about the challenges of educating young people, community leaders concluded that both economic development efforts and the quality of life in the District were inextricably linked to its ability to educate its students and prepare them to participate successfully in the workforce. It declared education a top priority and identified clear objectives: all young people should be able to read, write, speak and compute at high levels; identify and solve problems; analyze and synthesize information; utilize technology; and be prepared for responsible, global citizenship.

The Goals 2000 collaborative planning process was a critical force for positive momentum in the District in that it:

- focused attention, energy and resources on the fact that **all students need a sound education**, based on rigorous academic standards and modern vocational education practice that prepares young people for good careers and advanced education and training;

- established **two overarching goals** that became District-wide priorities: (1) to improve student achievement and advancement; and (2) to improve employment and career prospects;
- **declared systemic education reform and workforce development a top community priority and a fundamental community responsibility.** See Attachment Two for additional information on Goals 2000.

School-to-Career Transition

In 1998, building on the Economic Development and Goals 2000 initiatives, the District launched a broad-based planning process focused on creating a school-to-careers transition system. A coalition of stakeholders representing elected and appointed officials, educators, business, labor, government, community-based organizations, parents, and students worked together to design a comprehensive learning system that would simultaneously improve educational achievement and increase employment and career prospects for students.

The plan, called *Career Pathways*, successfully funded at \$9.6 million over five years, was a critical milestone because it **laid the foundation for a youth investment system** in four significant ways. The District of Columbia School-to-Careers plan:

- adopted the economic development **industry growth sectors** as the framework for the Career Pathways young people could choose to learn about the world of work;
- created a **career development** model that provides career awareness, exploration and experience for both in-school and out-of-school youth from K through age 21;

- developed a **model of collaboration** through the establishment of a broad-based, public-private Governing Council responsible for policy development and implementation; and
- engaged **business and labor as full partners** -- the D.C. Chamber of Commerce served as a broker with the business community, while the Metropolitan Washington AFL-CIO was actively engaged with organized labor. See Attachment Three for Executive Summary.

Youth Opportunities Initiative

In 1999, to complement and extend the Career Pathways initiative, a Youth Opportunities Initiative was launched to enhance services to primarily out-of-school youth. The plan targets the Enterprise Community, three target area groups of neighborhoods with disproportionately high levels of poverty, unemployment, single-parent households, crime and dropout rates. It calls for the establishment of six Community-based Youth Opportunity Centers, of which three are One-Stop Career Centers, located in those neighborhoods. Each Center will address a broad range of self-sufficiency, personal development, and support service needs.

The Youth Opportunities Plan is a critical piece of youth workforce development because it:

- focuses on identifying and assisting **out-of-school youth**, who often have multiple barriers to academic and employment success;
- provides the primary mechanism for identifying and assisting **hard-to-serve youth**, including the homeless, foster care placements, those with disabilities and those involved with the juvenile justice system; and it

- builds the **capacity of local communities** to provide supports and opportunity structures

The Plan was recently submitted for funding to the U.S. Department of Labor. While the District is awaiting notification of Plan approval, it embraces the Youth Opportunities Plan as the linchpin to greatly leveraging resources and enabling it to continue building a Career Pathways System of opportunities for serving severely at-risk youth. See Attachment Four for Summary.

Children and Youth Investment Initiative

In addition to these major economic and workforce development milestones, the District, like other cities and states, has a vast array of programs and resources dedicated to helping children and youth. Historically, many categorical programs were designed to intervene with children and youth either experiencing or considered “at risk” for certain problems, such as teen pregnancy, school dropouts and substance abuse. Such a “problem based” orientation has created various barriers to a comprehensive, positive approach to youth development and to a collaborative, integrated approach to service delivery.

Adopted in September, 1999, the Mayor’s Children and Youth Investment Partnership (CYIP), plans to minimize these barriers and promote service improvements in order to strengthen services to children, youth and their families. The vision is a collaborative that will align resources and create a seamless web of high quality services and opportunities that promote the healthy development of the city’s young people through a network of nurturing families, caring neighborhoods, and safe and enriching centers of learning in and out of school.

The basic premise behind this vision is that the traditional approach to child and youth services must be transformed so that there exists a continuum of supports for child and youth development and a collaborative approach to planning and service delivery. To create such a continuum of supports and to ensure a collaborative approach, the CYIP brings together all segments of the community: private industry, government, youth program advocates, foundations, faith-based groups, technical and capacity building providers, neighborhood collaboratives in each ward, parents, youth and other interested parties.

The CYIP creates a Children and Youth Investment Policy Council, a D.C. Investment Trust Fund Corporation of \$15 million and an Intra-Governmental Children and Youth Collaborative of 23 agency directors committed through a Memorandum of Understanding. The MOU presents a strategy for collaboratively organizing and aligning resources across a significant number of District government departments and agencies, and various components of the judicial system. The aim of the collaboration is “the effective delivery of children and youth services in the District of Columbia between governmental and non-profit organizations, and the alignment of resources to maximize positive results for children, youth and their families.” See Attachment Five for Executive Order and Memorandum of Understanding.

GOALS FOR YOUTH

Each of the key initiatives discussed above-- the Economic Resurgence Plan, Goals 2000, School-to-Career Transition, Youth Opportunities Initiative, and the Children and Youth Investment

Initiative -- represents a major building block of the District's broad economic and workforce development vision and goals for youth. Taken together, all are very much aligned and represent a common agenda for change, as reflected in Figure Two.

| Figure Two BROAD ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT GOALS FOR YOUTH |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Retain and increase the employer base❑ Target high-growth sectors in the District and Region through Industry-Specific Networks❑ Expand employment opportunities❑ Expand work-based learning opportunities❑ Establish high standards of academic achievement and career preparation for all youth❑ Align curriculum (no matter where it is taught) to workplace skills required for 21st century❑ Provide quality, neighborhood-based, out-of-school-time supports that foster successful learners❑ Expand opportunities for youth to develop as leaders, decision makers and problems solvers❑ Prioritize services to at-risk, special-needs and hard-to-serve youth❑ Focus reform efforts and resources at the community/school level❑ Build community capacity to provide resources, opportunities and supports❑ Mobilize private and federal government resources through collaborations and partnerships |

YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT SYSTEM

The District plans to integrate youth activities funded under Title I of WIA with all other youth-related workforce investment activities operating within its boundaries so as to ensure a comprehensive system that connects youth with a full range of services and community resources that lead to academic and employment success.

The Workforce Investment Council and its Youth Council (discussed in Section III) will provide broad-based policy guidance and coordination across the District's various economic and workforce development initiatives in achieving the cross-cutting goals and designing the integrated system

described above. Several basic principles will drive their approach, as outlined in a recent report developed by The Urban Institute: *Jobs and Workforce Development for the District of Columbia*:

- **Think and plan regionally.** Workforce efforts targeted to D.C. residents must recognize that the labor market is regional. Employment opportunities exist throughout the metropolitan area.
- **Work with and respond to private sector employers.** In today's tight labor market, employers have a strong incentive to participate in efforts that will provide them with qualified, reliable workers.
- **Recognize the diversity of the target population.** Individuals do not all face the same challenges or have the same level of skills and experience. A "one size fits all" approach will not be effective for youth.
- **Combine programs that focus on quick attachment to the labor force with those that also build human capital.** Programs that focus on quick attachments to the labor force should help participants develop a longer-term strategy for advancement such as enrollment in a community college, particularly for out-of-school youth. Programs that focus on longer-term education and skill building should maintain close ties to employers and build in meaningful work experience, such as internships for in-school youth.
- **Focus on employment and long-term self-sufficiency as the priority goals for all youth.**

Of particular importance to supporting the Workforce Investment Council and the successful implementation of the Youth Plan is the Department of Employment Services (DOES), which serves as the administrative entity for WIA. DOES is committed to systems reform and has aligned its priorities and resources to support both in-school and out-of-school youth, including, but not limited to establishing a network of One-Stop Career Centers throughout the District and revamping its summer work experience for youth ages 14-21 to directly link them with academic and occupational learning.

STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

As discussed earlier, an Intra-Governmental Children and Youth Investment Collaborative, will serve as the coordinating agent for implementing the broad strategic recommendations of the

Children and Youth Investment Policy Council. The Collaborative, comprised of 23 District agency Directors, will develop policy, monitor outcomes, evaluate effectiveness and recommend program streamlining and integration where necessary as the overall system evolves.

The youth workforce development plan under the Workforce Investment Act is a critical part of the District's overarching strategy for youth and will be implemented as a part of its overall framework.

The Workforce Investment Council and its Youth Council will focus on issues related to youth workforce development. The WIA Youth Council, which was formed initially to function as the Decision Council for school-to-careers transition, will ensure non-duplication of services, work to maximize returns on fiscal investments and promote effective and efficient delivery of high quality programs and services for youth. Figure Three provides a listing of the agencies that serve on the Youth Collaborative and those that are on the Workforce Investment Council/ Youth Council, as indicated by an asterick.

| <p>Figure Three</p> <p>AGENCIES ON THE YOUTH COLLABORATIVE AND WIA YOUTH COUNCIL</p> | |
|--|--|
| <p>Department of Human Services*</p> <p>Child and Family Services Agency</p> <p>Commission on Mental Health Services</p> <p>Office of the Chief Technology Officer</p> <p>Department of Recreation and Parks</p> <p>Department of Housing and Community Development*</p> <p>Fire and Emergency Medical Services</p> <p>Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs</p> <p>Department of Employment Services*</p> <p>University of the District of Columbia*</p> <p>D.C. Health and Hospitals Public Benefits Corp.</p> <p>D.C. Commission on Arts and Humanities</p> | <p>Department of Aging</p> <p>D.C. Public Libraries</p> <p>D.C. Public Schools*</p> <p>Department of Health</p> <p>Superior Court of D.C.</p> <p>U.S. Attorney's Office</p> <p>Office of the Corporation Counsel</p> <p>Department of Corrections*</p> <p>Office of Chief Medical Examiner</p> <p>Office of Grants Management</p> <p>D.C. Court Services/ Supervision</p> <p>D.C. Housing Authority*</p> |

The policy, planning and operational structure for developing and managing effective programs for youth is illustrated in Figure Four. By utilizing the comprehensive, systemic approach to youth development embodied in WIA, all youth programming will be guided by its effective principles and practices. Moreover, low-income students with multiple barriers to employment who are the focus of WIA will have access to a full range of education, community-based supports and career opportunities available within the District.

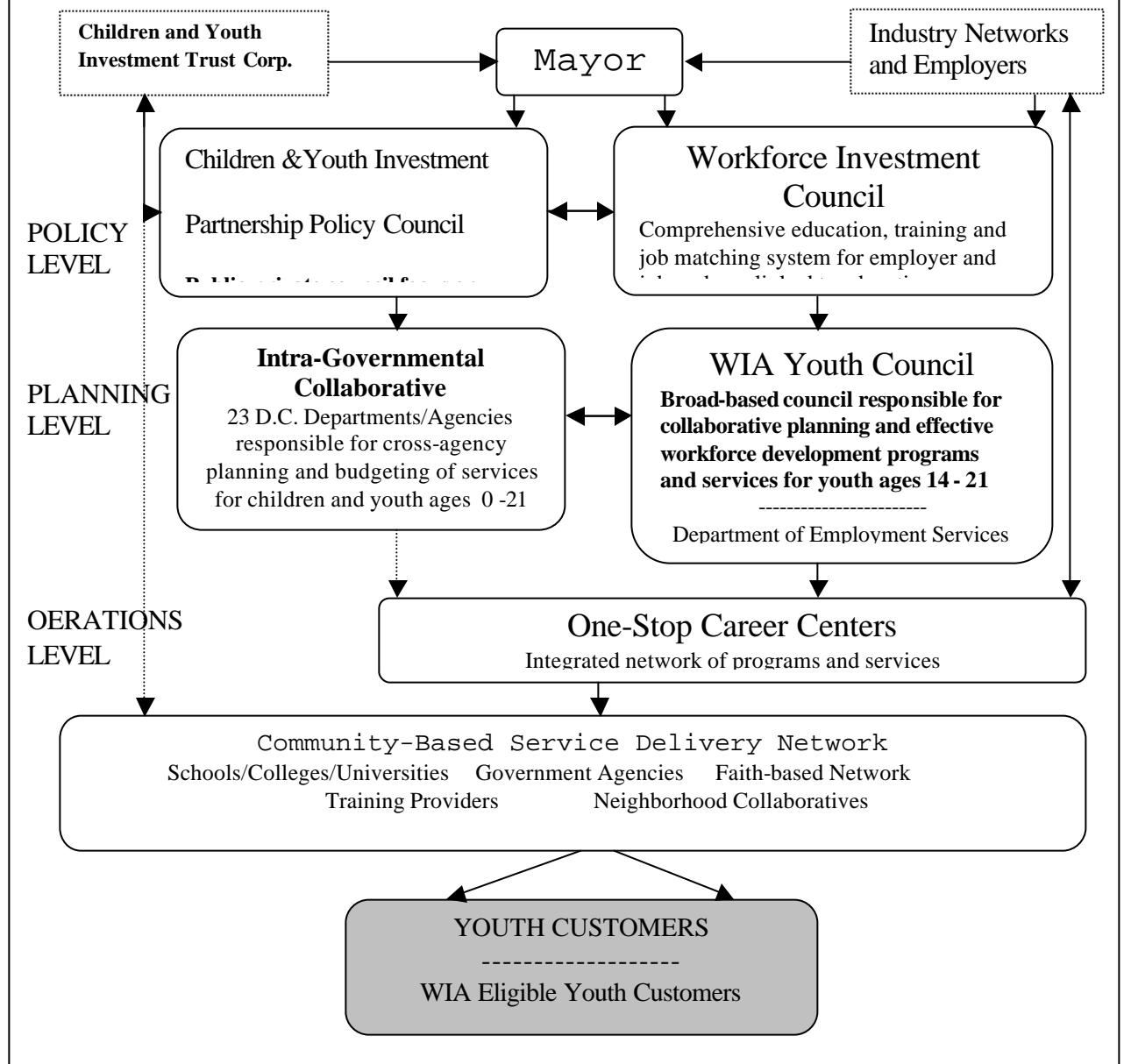
ENHANCEMENTS UNDER WIA

As a result of WIA implementation, current systems efforts will be enhanced and expanded by:

- Providing critical links between Career Pathways (primarily in-school) and Youth Opportunities (primarily out-of-school) activities by ensuring common assessment and service processes, aligning academic content between schools and learning centers, and connecting out-of-school youth with the key Industry Sectors and Career Pathways model;
- Supporting training and technical assistance to inter-agency staff regarding joint planning, case management, and job development;
- Building capacity of community-based organizations to work effectively with young people, build leadership potential among youth; and quantify results;
- Helping volunteer mentors and work-site supervisors develop common protocols and quality standards for their work with youth;
- Establishing governance, leadership and accountability to generate desired outcomes; and
- Promoting quality services and continuous improvement through regular customer feedback.

Figure Four

D.C. STRUCTURE FOR EFFECTIVE YOUTH PROGRAMMING



The enhancements provided by WIA are clearly needed and will greatly speed up the timetable for successful outcomes. They are achievable because the policy objectives and principles inherent in WIA are very consistent with the District' overall approach to systems change in support of positive outcomes for youth development, as outlined in Figure Five. Clearly, WIA is seen as a powerful resource for driving the kinds of changes identified as priorities in the District.

Figure Five

**WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT PRINCIPLES
ALIGN WITH D.C. PRIORITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

- systems change
- streamlined services
- universal access
- increased accountability for results
- improved collaboration
- strengthened partnerships with business
- community-based decision-making
- customer satisfaction
- commitment to continuous improvement

SECTION II: YOUTH PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Consistent with its commitment to increased accountability for results and its focus on continuous improvement, the D.C. Workforce Investment Council through the Youth Council has established youth performance indicators to assess the effectiveness of its youth workforce investment system and to ensure the optimization of federal and local funds in workforce investment activities. These performance indicators are in compliance with the requirements under the Workforce Investment Act Section 136 and include:

Core Indicators for Youth 14-18: (1) attainment of basic skills and, as appropriate, work readiness or occupational skills; (2) attainment of secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; and (3) placement and retention in post-secondary education or advanced training or advanced training, or placement and retention in military services, employment, or qualified apprenticeships.

Core Indicators for Youth 19-21: (1) entry into unsubsidized employment; (2) retention in unsubsidized employment 6 months after entry into the employment; (3) earnings received in unsubsidized employment 6 months after entry into employment; and (4) attainment of recognized credentials related to the achievement of educational skills or occupational skills.

The Workforce Investment Council also recognizes customer satisfaction as an important aspect of the continuous improvement process and plans to measure the customer satisfaction of both employers and participants who receive services funded through WIA. At a minimum, surveys will be utilized to assess customer satisfaction and provide feedback to the workforce investment system regarding areas of needed improvement.

Figure Six provides the core performance indicators, shown as goals with accompanying objectives, for the first three program years covered by this Plan. The levels of performance, once developed by the WIA Youth Council, will be objective, quantifiable and measurable, and reflect the expected progress toward continuously improving performance. The District will use the negotiated performance measures as a critical tool to evaluate progress in meeting the needs of eligible youth that receive WIA funded services.

SECTION III: ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT SYSTEM

As discussed earlier, the District's approach to youth development is focused squarely on emphasizing the enormous potential of youth, not just continued crisis-oriented responses to problems. Yet, leaders recognize the need to acknowledge and address current realities in order to adequately plan for the future. Such an assessment provides a powerful picture of the challenge – and of the enormity of the opportunity for change.

With a population of 523,000, the District enjoys a per capita income 44% higher than the national average. Yet its wealth is very unevenly distributed. Citywide, one in six residents – and one in four children -- lives in poverty. Certain neighborhoods and their youth are negatively and disproportionately impacted. Other startling statistics, from the *City's Statistical Index for D. C. Services 1994-1996*, tell more of the story.

- The youth unemployment rate Citywide in 1998 was 37.3% and almost 50% in high poverty areas;
- Based on 1999 data, only one in three entering the public schools graduates four years later, and more than half dropping out leave before completing the 10th grade year;
- District-wide, roughly 14% of teenagers are not in school and do not have a high school diploma; the percentage jumps to 20% in high poverty areas -- a rate more than 50% higher than the national average;
- About one-half of DC youth are scoring “Below Basic” on the SAT-9 reading standards, while over three-fourths are scoring “Below Basic” on the math standards;
- While 78% of those graduating from D.C. Public Schools enroll in the University of the District of Columbia, most entering freshmen (84%) do not complete a degree program, and the majority who do take six years or longer;
- District youth are more than five times as likely to be arrested for a violent crime than are their counterparts across the country;
- Citywide 66% of children under 18 live with only one parent; in high poverty neighborhoods that figure jumps to 86%.

YOUTH CUSTOMERS

In the broadest sense, the youth customers for the D.C. workforce investment system include **all** youth ages 14 to 21 – approximately 100,000 young people, or one fifth of the District’s population. As discussed in Section I, the District is firmly committed to a **SYSTEMS APPROACH** to workforce investment and views the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 as a policy framework for linking education, economic and workforce development priorities.

Within that systems context, the specific customers for youth activities outlined in and funded by this Plan will include approximately 28,000 eligible youth as defined under WIA and summarized in Figure Seven below.

Figure Seven
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA YOUTH CUSTOMERS UNDER WIA

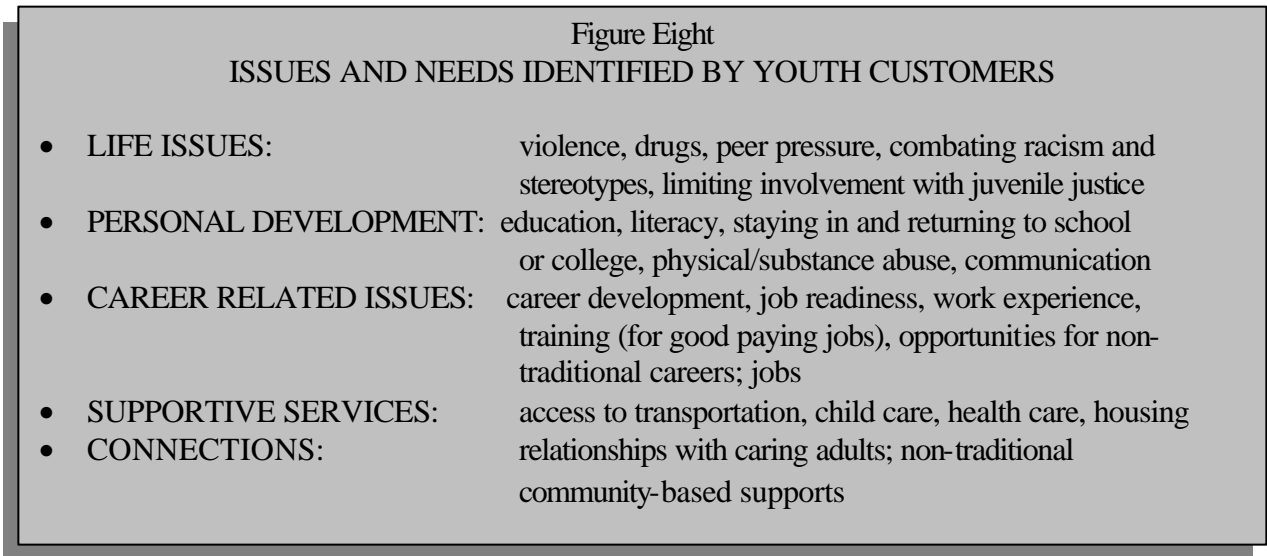
AN ELIGIBLE YOUTH UNDER WIA IS:

- (1) not less than age 14 and not more than age 21
- (2) a low income individual; and
- (3) an individual who is one or more of the following:
 - deficient in basic literacy skills;
 - a school dropout;
 - homeless, a runaway, or a foster child;
 - pregnant or a parent;
 - an offender;
 - an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment.

**PROJECTED NUMBER
OF YOUTH WHO MEET
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:**

28,000 (estimate)

In planning and designing a comprehensive workforce system for its youth, the District convened a number of focus groups with youth customers to get their direct input on needed services and supports. Across all groups, youth were consistent regarding their needs, as summarized in Figure Eight.



The results of these focus groups confirm the need to provide a full range of programs, services and community resources for youth in order to support academic and employment success. Such a comprehensive approach requires public-private partnerships, inter-agency collaboration, community-based operators – all elements required by the Workforce Investment Act, and guided by the Workforce Investment Council.

STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

As required by WIA section 111(b)(1), the Mayor of the District of Columbia has established a State Workforce Investment Board, referred to in D.C. as the Workforce Investment Council, to assist in the development of the State plan and to carry out all other functions

described by law as outlined below. The D.C. Workforce Investment Council was established by Mayor's Order # 99-85 and signed on June 2, 1999. See Attachment Six.

The Order provides for an orderly transition of the District of Columbia State Job Training Coordinating Council (SJTCC) and District of Columbia Private Industry Council (DCPIC) into the District of Columbia Workforce Investment Council (D.C.WIC). The Council was officially sworn in on October 19, 1999, and meets the requirements for membership as outlined in WIA section 111(b)(1).

Board appointments includes: the Mayor (as represented by the Director of the Department of Employment Services); 2 members of the District Council selected by the Chair; business; organized labor; youth representatives; organizations with workforce investment experience; District Agencies and other representatives that have expertise relative to the District. As required, a majority of Council members represent business and business organizations and the chairperson is a business representative. Figure Nine presents the mission and purpose of the D.C. WIC as stated by the Mayor's Order. See Attachment Seven for a listing of WIC members.

Figure Nine
PURPOSE OF THE D.C. WORKFORCE INVESTMENT COUNCIL

The D.C. Workforce Investment Council shall be a public-private partnership empowered to work with the Mayor and District Government to develop, implement, and continuously improve an integrated and effective workforce investment system. The D.C. WIC shall work to develop and maintain a streamlined, integrated, and effective workforce investment system; enhance systems accountability and performance; encourage private sector participation; and engender public input and support.

Mayor's Order # 99-85

The functions of the D.C. WIC not only meet, but exceed the requirements of the law as set forth in section 111(d). **In addition to the mandated functions**, the Mayor's Order also reflects that the D.C. WIC shall:

- Work with the jurisdictions surrounding the District to foster regional cooperation and mutually beneficial workforce investment approaches;
- Coordinate the workforce investment activities with economic development strategies and develop other employer linkages with such strategies; and
- Promote the participation of private sector employers in the workforce investment system and ensure the effective provision of connecting, brokering, and coaching activities through intermediaries to assist such employers in meeting hiring needs.

The Executive Order also establishes two standing committees, the Executive and Youth Council, as well as creates the authority to create other such committees as necessary to perform the functions of the WIB. The Youth Committee of the D.C. WIC will serve as the Youth Council mandated in WIA section 117(h)(1) and the membership and functions of the Youth Committee shall comply with the law as outlined in section 117(h)(2) and (h)(4). See Attachment Eight for a listing of WIC Youth Council members.

Of particular significance are the District agencies appointed to serve on the D.C.WIC:

- Director, Department of Employment Services (representing the Mayor);
- Director, Department of Human Services;
- Superintendent of the District of Columbia Public Schools;
- President, University of the District of Columbia;
- Director, Department of Corrections;
- Director, Department of Housing and Community Development;
- Director, District of Columbia Housing Authority

Each of these agencies is viewed as having a personal stake in the development of a coherent workforce investment system which will produce a high quality workforce. Many other agencies

will be involved with various committees and engaged in program operations and coordination.

COORDINATION WITH LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS; CRITERIA FOR APPOINTMENTS TO LOCAL BOARDS; FACTORS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS TO LOCAL AREAS; AND FORMULA ALLOCATION TO LOCAL AREAS

Under the Job Training Partnership Act, the District of Columbia was designated a single State service delivery area. As stipulated in Sec. 116(b) of the Workforce Investment Act (“Small States”), the Mayor of the District of Columbia is electing to continue such designation under WIA and is identifying the State as a local area under section 112(b)(5). As such, there is one allocation of funds for the District, 15% of which will be for state activity and 85% for local activity. Under such single designation, the State and local Workforce Investment Board are one in the same, therefore Sections III C-F do not apply to the District.

PROCESS FOR AWARDING GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

A complete draft package outlining the District’s Grant and Contract Award Process under the Workforce Investment Act has been developed. Regarding the **competitive process**, the Department of Employment Services (DOES), the administrative authority for implementation of JTPA/WIA, plans to develop and issue an **Request for Proposals (RFP)** from service providers throughout the community to provide skills training and placement assistance to eligible clients, including youth. See Attachment Nine for draft documents.

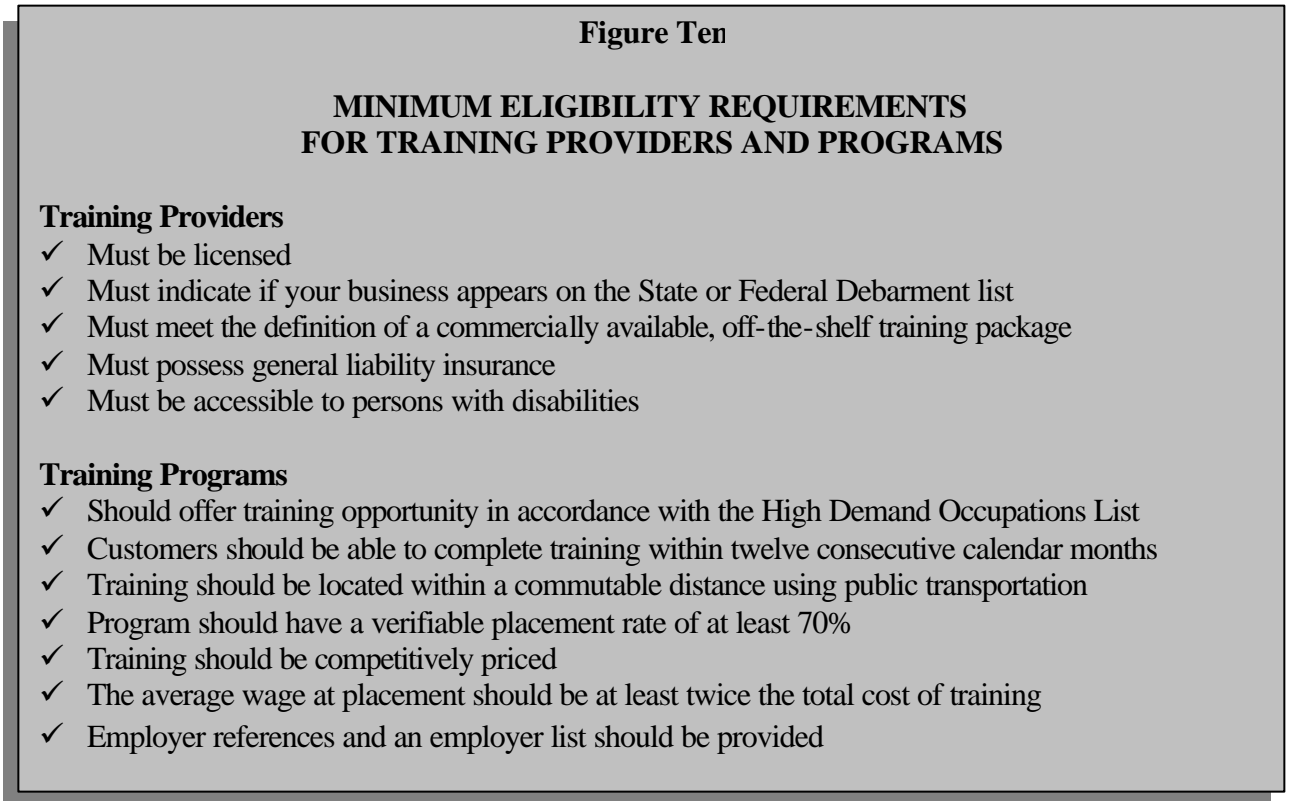
The competitive RFP will be targeted primarily to include only those service providers and programs that serve **Hard to Serve Populations**, to include: Ex-Offenders, Basic Skills deficient/English deficient; Women seeking non-traditional occupations; Persons with Disabilities; and Persons classified as homeless. Once finalized and approved for public solicitation, the RFP will be publicized for a minimum of thirty days, advertised in local newspapers and mailed to all potential service providers on the DOES mailing list. Evaluation teams have been formed to evaluate proposals based on a point system giving weight to each of the RFP requirements.

This strategy is intended to complement the **non-competitive Individual Referral Process**, or Individual Customer Accounts, which will serve as the primary method of service delivery. See Attachment Ten for draft documents.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTING PROVIDERS AND PROGRAMS

A Demand Occupations Training Providers List will be established to ensure that eligible JTPA/WIA youth clients have a wide variety of qualified training providers from which they can choose to satisfy their skills training needs. The Providers list, developed and maintained by the DOES Office of Contracting and Procurement, will be updated quarterly. Updated lists will be forwarded to the Office of Workforce Development for distribution to case manager in the field. After eligibility certification and objective assessment, program participants will select a qualified training provider from the list that offers courses in a career area consistent with the Individual

Service Strategy. Figure Ten summarizes minimum eligibility requirements for training providers and programs.



Application packets for the Demand Occupations Training Providers List will be mailed to Proprietary Schools, Community-based Organizations, Apprenticeship Providers, Colleges and Universities operating in the metropolitan Washington area and also posted on the DOES website. DOES may also receive requests from training providers who are not on the mailing list, but interested in IR agreements. Each application will be thorough screened by at least two DOES staff to ensure minimum requirements are satisfied and a series of administrative procedures completed prior to a provider being added to the approved list.

ONE-STOP IMPLEMENTATION

One-Stop Career Centers are the keystone of the District's improved and flexible system of employment and training assistance. They are the core of the Department of Employment Service's complete reengineering of its plan-of-service for all existing offices. By restructuring to provide an integrated system of customer service, One-Stops offer universal access, a wide variety of customer choice, expanded utilization of resources and a focus on outcomes rather than processes. In addition, One-Stops will transform the DOES into a customer service organization that uses technology to improve and enhance all areas of service delivery. While important for adults, such a comprehensive approach is particularly critical for youth who need guidance, structure and support to move to self-sufficiency.

The vision for the One-Stop system, call ***DC Networks***, is to create an integrated and widely available system of employment, training and information services for the District of Columbia that effectively links all of our customers with the labor market service that need and want. To achieve the vision of offering the widest possible access to employment and training services, ***DC Networks*** has several critical components, as outlined below. A total of eleven full service, satellite and virtual ***Networks*** centers are planned. See Attachment Eleven for comprehensive materials describing the ***Networks*** system.

- ***Two Track Approach*** – Track One involves remaking of the current customer service system and centers to develop three full service ***Networks*** service locations strategically located to provide the broadest possible access. Track Two will be electronic or virtual offices through

an Internet-based service package that will replicate, to the extent possible without human intervention, the same services available at office locations.

- ***Three Levels of Intervention:*** At the three ***DC Networks*** service centers, three levels of service will be available: (1) supervised self-service, for customers who need minimal staff intervention; (2) assisted service, for customers who need some assistance in finding jobs and services; and (3) intensive case management, for customers who need significant assistance in interpreting information, problem solving, and accessing services.
- ***Integrated Service System:*** ***DC Networks*** is built on a foundation of partnerships with other agencies and organizations such as TANF, Secondary and Post-Secondary Education/ School-to-Careers, Juvenile Justice, Community Housing, various community-based organizations, and many others, who will be offered on-site space and support, including staff training. Temporary Employment Agencies provide links to valuable work experience.
- ***Comprehensive Service Delivery:*** As a result of the extensive network of partnerships being developed, both physical and virtual ***Networks*** Service System sites will offer employers and job seekers a comprehensive, integrated package of services, as outlined in Figure Eleven.
- ***Partnerships with Business:*** Key partnerships have been formed with major area employers, including CVS, United Airlines and Giant Food. For example, CVS is locating its regional employment center in one of the ***DC Networks*** locations, creating a public-

private partnership that will provide job seekers direct access to career opportunities in a growing service company and will offer CVS ready access to job ready workforce.

- **Staff Development:** A specific staff training package is being designed to provide staff from cooperating agencies the skills and knowledge they need to use both the electronic and office **Networks** service system to assist them in their work with clients.

The **Networks** system is the centerpiece for the provision of the required design and program elements of WIA in support of eligible youth. In that capacity they will provide:

- Determination of eligibility to receive specialized services
- Orientation to the information and other services available through the One-Stop
- Assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities and interests
- Individualized plans of service
- Career counseling, career planning and support through self-sufficiency coordinators
- Information on and linkages to a broad range of supportive services
- Life skills management workshops to enhance job getting and job keeping skills
- Referral to and enrollment in DOES sponsored training programs
- Connections to employers for internships and other work-based learning opportunities
- Information on employment opportunities and the job skills necessary to obtain them
- Information on financial assistance for (non-funded) education and training programs
- Job search and job placement assistance

CURRENT SYSTEM ABILITY TO MEET YOUTH NEEDS

The District of Columbia is ready, willing and able to implement an effective workforce investment system for its youth that will fuel the growing and diverse economic base. The District enjoys significant strengths:

- **Shared Vision.** For the past several years, public and private leaders in the District have worked together to create and articulate a shared vision for youth – one built on promise, not

problems. That vision gives focus, direction and energy to the system's ability to respond effectively.

- ***Leadership.*** The District has new, strong leadership in its elected and appointed officials, including the Mayor, District Council, Director of Employment Services, Director of Youth Programs, Superintendent of Schools, etc. Private sector and labor leadership is energized and playing a key role in shaping the agenda, through participation in business and labor organizations such as the D.C. Agenda, D.C. Chamber of Commerce and Metroplitan Washington Council AFL-CIO, as well as participation on critical boards.
- ***Children and Youth Investment Initiative.*** The recent launch of the Children and Youth Investment Initiative has brought together District and federal agencies, community and business organizations and other private entities to promote a seamless approach for planning and delivering services to children, youth and families. It provides a strong backdrop against which to launch the youth workforce investment initiative.
- ***Regional economic growth.*** Economic growth in the District and surrounding region is booming. The labor market is tight, jobs are available, and skills are rewarded in the marketplace. Business-education partnerships are growing, and employers are willing to foster youth development and work-based learning strategies such as internships as longer term investments in addressing workforce and skill shortages.
- ***Strong infrastructure of One-Stops.*** As discussed above.

At the same time, weaknesses also exist and need to be addressed. In preparing this plan, members of the Youth Council met on three separate occasions. One activity focused on the

identification of barriers to achieving the Vision of youth workforce investment. Consensus was high among group members that challenges revolved around issues of **change, communication and commitment**.

Potential ***change barriers*** include: adjusting to change; creativity in coming up with new, more effective ways of attacking problems; willingness to share resources (human, information, financial, technical); turf; staff capacity; and creating appropriate and effective training opportunities. Potential ***communication barriers*** included accessibility of information on resources and supports currently available; lack of communication among partners; lack of technology to link partners/services/ resources; finding out what youth really need and want for self-sufficiency; bringing youth to the table; reaching hard-to-serve youth (homeless, alternative life styles, etc.); ineffective communications between staff and youth. Potential ***commitment barriers*** included translating commitment from Department heads to all staff; getting all the right support players involved; and involving front line workers in the planning so change is not seen as a “top down” mandate, but rather the right thing to do for youth.

STATE PRIORITIES FOR YOUTH

Based on the high drop-out rate and low post-secondary participation rate alone, District youth are ill prepared for the demands of a 21st century labor force. While all youth are of concern, as evidenced in the D.C. Children and Youth Investment Partnership and other initiatives, of

particular priority are the hard-to-serve: foster care, welfare, homeless and disabled youth all of whom have multiple barriers to academic and employment success.

As outlined in the next section, Strategies for Improvement, the District intends to create a seamless web of high quality services and challenging opportunities that support all students, with a special focus on the hard-to-serve. Specifically, the priority objectives are to:

- Build community opportunities for positive youth development in schools, neighborhoods, recreation centers, parks and faith-based institutions;
- Mobilize private and federal government resources through collaborations and partnerships;
- Support exemplary programs that are measurably effective and worthy of replication;
- Expand opportunities for young people to develop as leaders, decision-makers and problem solvers.

SECTION IV: STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

This section presents an overview of the District's Plan to provide comprehensive services to eligible youth. It addresses capacity building, key partnerships with education, foster care, welfare and other systemic deliverers of youth services and it describes how the District will meet the provisions of the Act regarding youth program design.

CAPACITY TO DEVELOP AND MANAGE EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS

As part of preparing for the Children and Youth Investment Initiative, an organizational assessment was completed on twelve departments and agencies that provide programs and services to children, youth and families. In addition, a needs assessment was conducted by the Urban Institute, Georgetown University and the University of the District of Columbia to determine the capacity of District agencies to develop and manage effective programs.

The assessments found that government agencies in the District are doing tremendous work for some of the city's most fragile population – especially children. However, because the District has lacked an intentionally designed, fully integrated system of supports for young people, departments are often unable to focus resources effectively and to evaluate the impact of their efforts in helping young people reach their full potential. General systems issues identified were:

- The focus of children and youth is based on their problems and not their potential.
- Critical linkages along the development continuum of 0-21 are missing.

- Linkages between agencies, departments, schools and community partners that serve children and youth are either missing or unclear.
- Methods used by agencies to achieve their goals are not clearly linked to their missions, objectives, and evaluation criteria;
- There is a lack of connectivity among various departments' and agencies' critical information management systems;
- Service redundancies exist either because agencies are not aware of the work being done by other agencies, or because agencies develop services because the appropriate agency lacked the capacity to undertake new programming.

These types of issues and barriers are certainly not unique to the District; they characterize most local, state and federal government systems. What is unique, however, is that the District actually did an assessment of its capacity, identified critical issues and put together a comprehensive plan to address them through the broad-based work of the Intra-Governmental Collaborative discussed previously. Such an effort truly reflects a will to work differently.

Moreover, specific areas have been identified for capacity building to ensure quality implementation practices. Key areas to be addressed through professional development, technical assistance, staff training and other vehicles for capacity building include:

- ***Inter-agency planning and collaboration***: assisting agencies to adopt new ways of thinking “outside the box” and working across agencies lines and turf;

- ***Case management for field staff***: facilitating skill development for counselors, self-sufficiency coordinators, job developers, and others regarding effective case management practices and the new role of serving as a “broker” of services on behalf of youth;
- ***Working effectively with community-based organizations and intermediaries***: supporting community organizations to build capacity in working effectively with youth to produce positive outcomes;
- ***Mentor development for volunteers***: providing training to community volunteers and employees in businesses who are willing to serve as mentors to eligible youth; and
- ***Supervisory training for employers***: ensuring common protocols and minimum standards for supervisors of youth in work-based learning.

COORDINATION WITH KEY RESOURCES

Coordination with key resources is critical to the success of youth workforce development. The District is well positioned to implement a comprehensive delivery strategy because it already has in place the infrastructure to coordinate efforts among key partners. As discussed in Section I, the District has coordinated policy development through both the Children and Youth Policy Council and the Workforce Investment Council. It has coordinated planning processes established through the Intra-Agency Collaborative and the WIA Youth Council. Finally, it has operational coordination through the One Stop Career Centers and a broad network of community-based service deliverers and supports.

While all of the partners in the network are important, several play an especially critical role in foster academic achievement, career development and employment opportunities for youth, including public secondary and post-secondary education, the Job Corps and the Youth Opportunities Initiative. Others provide assistance to youth with special needs or barriers to employment, such as foster care, public assistance, and services to youth with disabilities. Close coordination with each of these major “sub-systems” is critical and a major focus of the WIA Youth Council.

Education

Approximately 10,000 WIA eligible youth are enrolled in the District of Columbia Public School System (DCPS). These students will benefit from the significant systemic changes that have taken place in DCPS during the past two years as summarized below.

In 1998 the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) developed a *comprehensive Academic Plan* with four main goals: (1) Improve educational achievement; (2) Ensure quality school staff; (3) Increase accountability throughout the school system; and (4) Promote school restructuring, decentralization and parental choice. This was followed by movement to a *standards-based system of instruction*. Rigorous content standards and high benchmark expectations for what all students should know and be able to do by the time they reach grades 3, 5, 8 and 11 in reading, writing, listening, viewing and speaking, and mathematics were developed and have been implemented in all schools.

Adopting the model set forth by SCANS Report, DCPS began incorporating *new workplace basics* into the learning experiences preK-16 that includes Basic Skills (as reflected in the Content Standards above), Thinking Skills (thinking creatively, making decisions, problems solving and knowing how to learn) and Personal Qualities (individual responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management and integrity). Finally, *system-wide assessments* were implemented in Grades 3, 5, 8 and 11, as well as authentic or “real-life” assessment processes such as portfolios, problem-based modules, and other performance-based activities.

These four fundamental changes – a comprehensive academic plan, standards-driven system, new workplace basics, and system-wide assessments -- will support WIA eligible youth as they grow and develop within the DCPS toward academic and employment success.

Moreover, in developing and designing the school-to-careers plan for the District in 1998, the School-to-Careers Governing Council ensured that strong linkages to an array of employment and training resources were fully incorporated into the *Career Pathways* system for in- and out-of-school youth. As a result, strong linkages to many programs and support services are already fully operation for WIA eligible in-school youth through DCPS, and planned for out-of-school youth through the University of the District of Columbia. Since both DCPS and UDC sit on the WIA Youth Council, those linkages are expected to be enhanced and expanded.

Post-Secondary Educational Opportunities:

Strong linkages between secondary and advanced education and training opportunities of all types are essential to ensure that District students experience life-long learning and, as a result, enjoy continued upward mobility and career opportunities. Yet the District is unique in that it has only one state post-secondary institution, the University of the District of Columbia (UDC). While numerous linkages with youth are already in place, plans to strengthen connections to schools and community organizations are underway.

The University of the District of Columbia. The University is a comprehensive 4-year post-secondary institution that also offers 2-year associate degree and certificate programs, providing numerous options for young people regarding higher education. Articulation agreements based on Tech Prep and existing Career Academies are already in place and a District-wide articulation agreement with the University for *Career Pathways* is complete.

UDC has developed a proposal to create an Open University at Community Learning Centers throughout the District. Through the Open University initiative, a vast array of programs would be offered, including a high school-to-colleges bridges program, adult basic education, vocational-technical skills certificate programs, and continuing education. These programs would offer youth new routes of entry into the District only post-secondary institution, while at the same time providing intensive college-level preparatory, employment skills training and entry-level college training to needy residents who are ill equipped to meet the rigors of a four-year University program.

District of Columbia College Access Program (DC-CAP). DC-CAP is a new non-profit organization funded by Washington-area companies and foundation dedicated to encouraging and enabling District public high school students to enter and graduate from college. With more than \$15 million in corporate and foundation support already committed, DC-CAP will provide counseling and financial assistance to students who might otherwise never have the opportunity to attend college. The program will provide advisors, offer counseling on financial aid and provide “last dollar” awards of up to \$2,000 for up to five years.

Jobs Corps

Twelve Job Corps centers operate in Region III, including the Potomac Job Corp center in Washington D.C. and the Woodland and Woodstock Job Corp in nearby Maryland suburbs. WIA eligible youth ages 16 through 24 who are U.S. citizens or legal residents can attend a Job Corp Center to finish school, learn a business or trade and get a good job. Students can learn valuable basic skills and earn a GED or high school diploma, as well as get advance training in over 100 occupations. Job Corp Centers place a special emphasis on interesting young women in non-traditional growth occupations.

A strong referral network to Job Corps already exists in the District through the Public Schools, Department of Employment Services, One-Stop Centers and community based organizations. Through that network, approximately 700 young adults are referred annually. As a result of the expansion of One-Stop Career Centers, implementation of the WIA youth investment system, and participation by a Job Corp representative on the WIA Youth Council, it is expected that coordination with Job Corps will be enhanced.

Out-of-School Youth

As discussed briefly in Section I, the District recently submitted an urban Youth Opportunities Initiative (YOI) grant designed to serve out-of-school youth in three high-poverty, high-need areas. The Project design and service strategy centers around the creation of five Youth Opportunity Centers, three of which will be One-Stop Centers, and all of which will be linked to One-Stop Centers through a shared database. The database will ensure that outreach, intake, assessment and service plans for each youth are tracked throughout the system, which facilitate sharing of information among the youth centers and all major external providers.

Through the Youth Opportunities Initiative, twenty-seven self-sufficiency coordinators, 11 job coaches/ developers and 10 outreach workers will be assigned to each of the five Youth Opportunity Centers in proportion to the number of youth being served. These staff will work with community organizations, the school system and government agencies to provide outreach, recruitment and intake services, conduct individual assessments, and develop individual service

plans based on those assessments. Since the D.C. Department of Employment Services is administratively responsible for WIA, One-Stops and the Youth Opportunities Initiative, there will be a synergy of effort and ability to maximize dollars targeted for WIA eligible youth residing in the enterprise community.

In addition, the Quantum Opportunities Program, a national dropout prevention model, will serve as the primary model for supporting drop out prevention for *in-school at risk youth*. Once students are enrolled in the Quantum Program, they will have an assigned counselor, an adult mentor, who will follow them for four years. The Youth Opportunities Initiative will support five self-sufficiency coordinators to work with school counselors to perform intake, assessment, referrals, counseling and other support services to in-school youth.

Youth with Disabilities

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (DC/RSA) is the District's principle agency for the provision of services leading to employment and self-sufficiency for persons with disabilities, defined as physical or mental impairments that constitute or result in a substantial impediment to employment. DC/RSA provides services to individuals with physical, mental, and learning disabilities as well as those with chronic health conditions.

In FY99, DC/RSA received a total of more than 100 new referrals, and served more than 350 youth and young adults ages 14-21. Services include:

- Comprehensive Assessment to identify physical, mental, learning, vocational and assistive technology needs and services;
- Employment Planning to identify goals, objectives, resources, etc. to obtain employment;
- Support Services such as medical/psychological restoration, technology devices and aids;
- Training (vocational, academic and supportive services) to obtain measurable vocational/employment skills consistent with the workplace requirements in the chosen career field;
- Trial Work Experience to explore capabilities and capacity to perform in work situations;
- Employment placement in job opportunities that are compatible to the interests, skills, abilities and choice of the youths and young adults with disabilities. Employment settings include competitive, supported, home-based and entrepreneurial; and
- Follow-up Services (12 months) to ensure customer and employer satisfaction and to identify and address additional supports and services.

DC/RSA has pledged its full support and cooperation in the planning and implementation of the Workforce Investment Act “to promote and/or facilitate the accomplishment of long-term rehabilitation goals leading to employment outcomes and intermediate rehabilitation objectives for youth with disabilities, in- and out-of school. Specifically, DC/RSA has agreed to enhance and expand services to youth with disabilities and to do the following:

- co-locate DC/RSA staff at local One-Stop career and employment centers;
- increase outreach to students with disabilities who are not served by DCPS Special Education;
- increase outreach to out-of-school youth with disabilities through collaborative efforts with community-based organizations;
- address staffing needs and providing professional development opportunities to staff;
- identify vocational/employment training and social support service program designed specifically for youth and young adults; and
- expand its capacity to collect, maintain and report data

As a result, DC/RSA expects to increase by 10% the number of in- and out-of-schools youth and young adults with disabilities served through WIA, the Youth Opportunities Initiative and the Mayor’s Child and Youth Initiative.

Other Special Needs and Hard-to-Serve Youth

The District fully recognizes that many youth have multiple barriers and may require high intensity, multi-faceted services to fully address their needs. Such youth would include those with connections to TANF, foster care and juvenile justice, as well as pregnant teens, young parents, the homeless, youth in public housing, and limited English speakers.

While these youth, whether in- or out-of-school, would receive comprehensive assistance through the program design discussed below, the District has targeted them for priority service. As such, the Department of Employment Services plans to enter into special Memoranda of Understanding with the key agencies that serve these youth, including the Department of Human Services and the General Receiver of Family and Child Services to ensure special coordination of effort.

PROGRAM DESIGN

Youth workforce development services under WIA will entail, at a minimum, the required program design and elements, and additional elements in accordance with Section 129 of the Act. As a result, a comprehensive array of services will be available to all eligible youth within the District, as outlined here and, in some cases, discussed more fully below:

- an objective **assessment** of the academic levels, skill levels and service needs of each youth;

- an **individualized service strategy** that identifies achievement objectives, employment goals, and appropriate services based on the outcome of the objective assessment;
- preparation for **postsecondary education** as discussed above, if appropriate;
- strong **linkages between academic and occupational learning**, provided through the Career Pathways system to both in- and out-of school youth (see discussion below);
- as appropriate, **paid and unpaid work experiences**, including internships and job shadowing (see discussion below);
- tutoring, study skills training and instruction leading to the completion of secondary school, including **drop out prevention strategies** through the Quantum Opportunities Program (as discussed above);
- **alternative secondary school services** through private charter schools, ;
- **summer youth employment opportunities** that are directly linked to academic and occupational learning through Career Pathways;
- **occupational skills training**, as appropriate (see discussion below);
- **apprenticeship opportunities** in the construction trades, day care and pharmaceutical training;
- **preparation for unsubsidized employment**, through core and advanced workshops in employability readiness;
- **effective connections to intermediaries** with strong links to the job market, such as the D.C. Chamber of Commerce and the AFL-CIO, as well as local and regional employers;
- **entrepreneurial training** for youth to be exposed to all aspects of business operations and ownership;

- **leadership development opportunities**, which encourage responsibility and other positive social behaviors (see discussion below);
- **adult mentoring** for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months;
- **extensive supportive services** provided in partnership with other agencies and community based organizations;
- **follow-up services** for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation; and
- **comprehensive guidance and counseling**, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate.

Linkages between Academic and Occupational Learning

The *Career Pathways* selected for inclusion in the D. C. School-to-Careers system reflect the economic development priorities of the District, as well as the economic realities of the greater Washington labor market area, including northern Virginia and suburban Maryland. Each subsumes numerous sub-sets of careers or occupations. The sample career areas listed in Figure Twelve are examples of some of the many options.

Each *Pathway* is a well-designed, sequence of courses integrating rigorous academic content standards and benchmark expectations, employability skills development and occupational skill standards, as well as career-related, work-based learning experiences that are integrated

Figure Twelve
District of Columbia Career Pathways and Sample Career Areas

| | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <u>Business and Marketing</u> | <u>Health and Human Services</u> | <u>Arts and Communication</u> |
| Business and Finance | Public Service | Performing and Visual Arts |
| Travel and Tourism | Law, Justice and Security | Integrated Media |
| Cosmetology and Fashion | Practical Nursing | International Studies |
| | <u>Engineering and Science</u> | <u>Industrial Technology</u> |
| | Pre-engineering | Automotive Technology |
| | Electronics and CAD | Building and Construction |
| | Horticulture | Transportation Technology |

with the school-based plan. To ensure a systemic and developmentally appropriate sequence of integrated learning over time, *Pathways* also incorporates a model for career development with four stages:

- Career Awareness (early learning years)
- Career Exploration (middle learning years)
- Selection of a Career Pathway (transition to senior learning years)
- Career Experience (senior learning years)

In elementary and middle schools, young people will become aware of and explore different career and work settings through age-appropriate activities such as guest speakers, field trips and career days.

Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences

During high school and post-secondary education, students will have numerous opportunities to learn first-hand about the world of work, ranging from job shadows to structured paid work experiences. As students move along the career development continuum, work-based learning

experiences will be integrated with school-based learning strategies such as integrating theory and application and performance-based assessments. Employer and labor partners will play a critical role in providing work-based learning experiences.

In January the District is launching Passport-to-Work, a structured year-round Internship Program for in-school youth. Initially targeting seniors and eventually moving into lower grades, Passport-to-Work will provide paid internships for qualified students with employers in their area of future career interest. The City has appropriated \$1.5 million in support of the Passport program. Students may continue in their Passport worksite placement for the summer.

Occupational Skills Training

Occupational skills training will be provided through several vehicles. Youth enrolled in the Passport-to-Work Program will experience skills training during their internship experience. Job Corps enrollees will benefit from technical skills training through enrollment in specific occupational training courses. Providers of individual referral will offer extensive options for skills training.

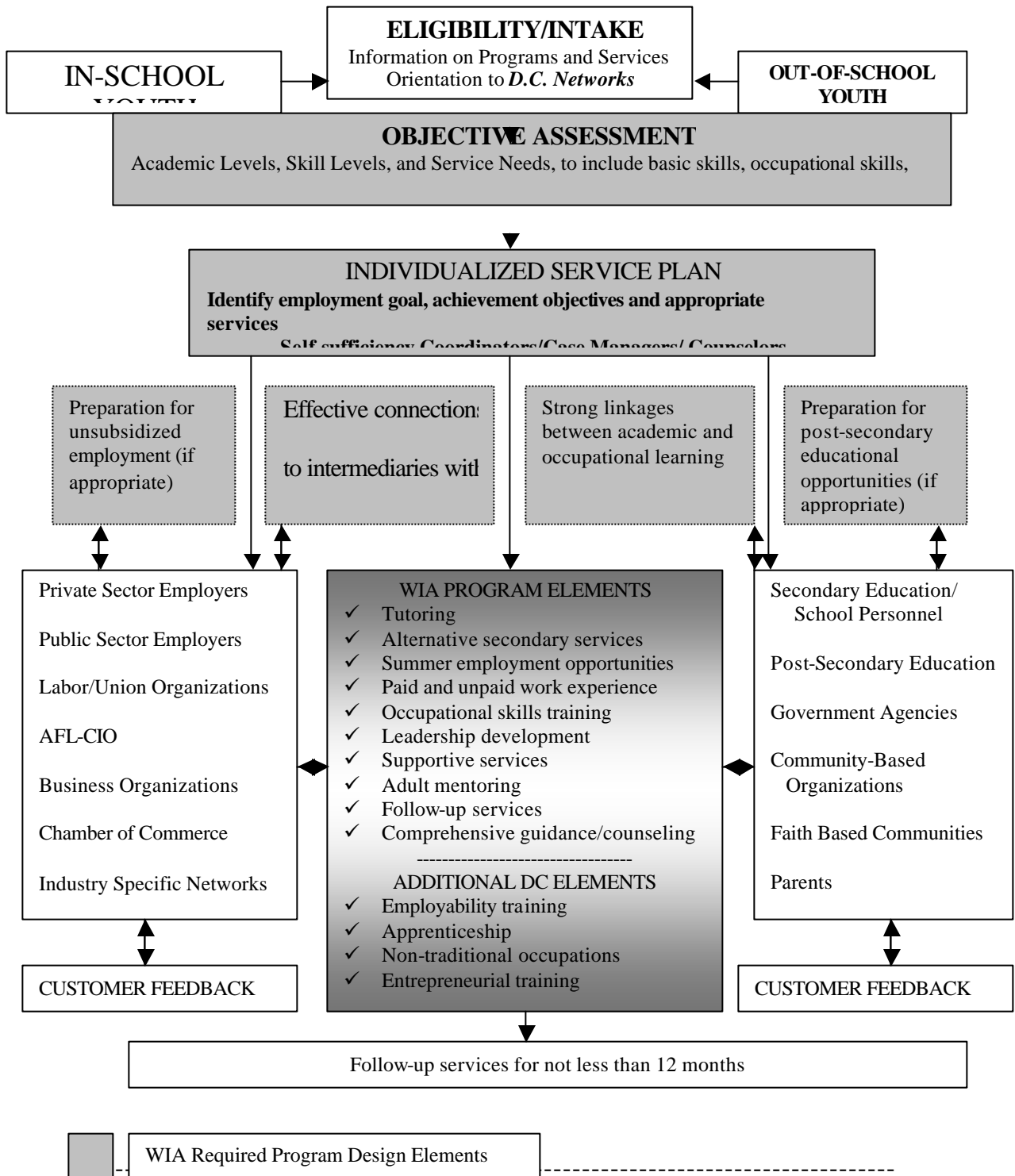
Leadership Development Opportunities

The District of Columbia operates a dynamic and successful Mayor's Leadership Institute for Youth. The Leadership Model is designed to train the next generation of youth leaders through a

structured and rigorous sequence of training, community development and action, and leadership development and planning. The comprehensive training component addresses self-management, administrative and technical skills; cultural diversity; health; conflict resolution and career planning. In community development youth learn about the political, economic, and social systems of the City, then they are given a chance to apply the learning by participating in Youth Government, Ward Development and a variety of entrepreneur activities. Approximately, 500 youth participate annually, and the program now has over 6,000 alumnae.

Figure Thirteen is a visual representation of the design of the WIA youth workforce investment system. It incorporates all of the required program elements and attempts to demonstrate the flow of youth through the workforce development system. The pages following the Youth System contain a matrix of the various partners involved in the youth investment system, with an overview of the roles of the various groups in planning, start-up and full implementation.

Figure Thirteen
YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT SYSTEM



SECTION V. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

ENSURING COLLABORATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Mayor Williams, the District of Columbia Workforce Investment Council and the WIC Youth Council are all committed to ensuring that the teamwork that characterizes this administration and the spirit of collaboration that fostered the smooth development of this proposal will not only continue, but grow. Moreover, they have adopted the principles of continuous improvement as part of the “New Way of Thinking, Working, Acting and Delivering” children and youth services within the District.

Specifically, a number of steps have been and will be taken over the life of this Plan to promote continued collaboration and ensure continuous improvement. Each is discussed below in some detail to communicate the level of intent that is driving this effort.

The Industry Networks and Cross-Cutting Policy Working Groups established under *the Economic Resurgence of Washington, D.C., Citizens Plan for Prosperity in the 21st Century*, are in operation (refer to Section I discussion.) They have set ambitious agendas, including priority and medium term objectives, which have been published as working reports inviting the people of the District to join the broad-based resurgence effort. The Director of the Department of

Employment Services, who represents the Mayor on the WIC, also sits on the economic development Workforce Policy group to ensure collaboration of effort.

While all the efforts of the Industry Networks and Cross-Cutting Policy groups support workforce development efforts, the following themes for action developed by the economic development Workforce Policy Group for the Workforce Investment Council are of critical importance:

- ***Inventory all of the entities that are a part of the workforce development system*** and explicitly assess their track records and capabilities. This assessment will reflect the service needs in all city neighborhoods against the capacities of community-level institutions now attempting to address those needs.
- ***Prepare and distribute comprehensive public report cards*** based on these findings in an effort to build broad public awareness and understanding of the system and the results. The report card will reflect the actual performance of the various service providers against the performance indicators discussed in Section II.
- ***Expand and improve the service capacity of community-based organizations*** to enhance their abilities to provide effective services and program outcomes. Capacity building will focus on issues related to case management, literacy and basic skills, life skills, and the provision of childcare and transportation services.
- ***Expand and enhance private sector involvement in workforce development***, particularly as it relates to youth workforce investment by providing mentors, workplace supervisors, and work-based learning opportunities.

- ***Establish effective regional collaboration*** through strong working relationships with Workforce Investment Boards in other jurisdictions in the metropolis. The focus will be to set up mechanisms to collaborate on information sharing, information systems development, operations (job opportunities and services) and transportation services.

Similarly, the D.C. Children and Youth Investment Collaborative agenda is in full operations and will play a vital role in ensuring ongoing collaboration and continuous improvement. The Intra-governmental Children and Youth Collaborative has been established and meets monthly and will issue formal reports on progress towards meeting measurable objectives. All government agencies that sit on the Workforce Investment Council and Youth Council also sit on the Intra-governmental Collaborative.

Finally, the Youth Council of the WIC is directly charged with ensuring collaboration among the various stakeholders involved in youth workforce development and with monitoring the continuous improvement process within the district to ensure youth and employer customers are well-served.

Within the context of the other key youth initiatives outlined above, the **Youth Council will SUPPORT SYSTEMS CHANGE** by working to:

- link youth programs more closely with local labor market requirements as defined by the Industry Networks;
- align and leverage resources to maximize federal resources by working with the Intra-governmental Collaborative; and
- ensure high quality programs and services by providing capacity building to community organizations and government agency staff.

Consistent with the intent of WIA, the **Youth Council will PREPARE YOUTH FOR SUCCESS** by working to:

- ensure services are provided based on individual assessments of need;
- provide comprehensive services to youth through the One-Stop service delivery system;
- require education and training programs and service providers to meet quality standards;
- offer public information on performance outcomes

The commitment and intent of the District of Columbia in the development of this Transition Youth Plan is to fully realize – **and exceed** – the requirements and expectations of the Workforce Investment Act and to use the framework it provides to build the most effective youth workforce investment system in the Country.

Moreover, this Transition Youth Plan will serve as the blueprint for guiding the leaders and citizens of the District forward as they work collaboratively to improve youth outcomes. By simultaneously developing effective programs and services for youth **and** building strong

support capacity within communities, the District is poised to implement a 21st century youth workforce development system.

Hyman, James B. *Spheres of Influence: A Strategic Synthesis and Framework for Community Youth Development*, prepared for the Annie E. Casey Foundation, June, 1999.